

## Whom do I call if I think I have a mold problem?

The Mississippi Department of Health **does not** offer mold inspection or removal services.

- Mold cleanup is the responsibility of the individual home or business owner.
- Private environmental firms provide mold inspection and removal services.
- Look in your local phone book's Yellow Pages under "mold and mildew services" to find a firm near you.

## Where do I go for more information?

For more information on mold and other related issues, the Mississippi Department of Health recommends the following resources:

### Environmental Protection Agency

1-800-438-4318

[www.epa.gov/iaq/molds](http://www.epa.gov/iaq/molds)

### The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

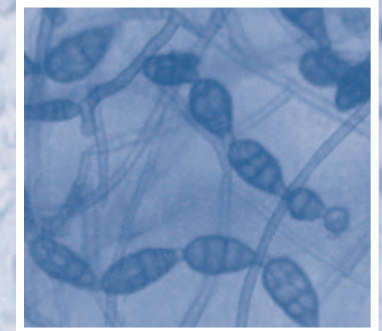
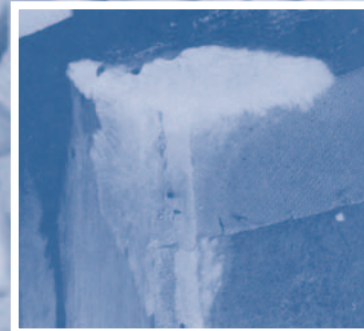
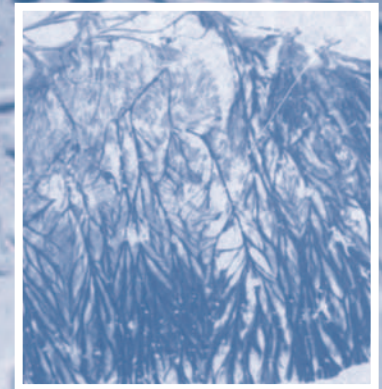
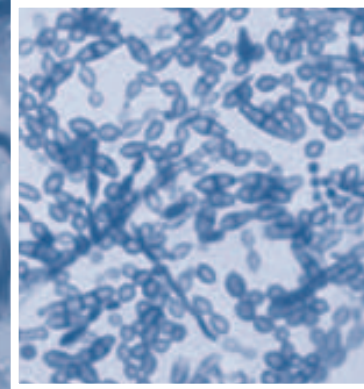
1-800-311-3435

[www.cdc.gov/health/mold.html](http://www.cdc.gov/health/mold.html)

### MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

1-866-HLTHY4U (1-866-458-4948)

[www.HealthyMS.com](http://www.HealthyMS.com)



# What You Should Know About Mold

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

# What is mold?

Mold is a type of fungus, like mushrooms and yeast. It is a simple life form found in warm, damp places.

- Mold can be found inside or outside the home.
- Mold spreads through invisible airborne particles called spores.
- Mold grows when spores land somewhere warm and damp.
- Mold needs organic material for food, like leaves, wood, and paper.
- Mold slowly destroys whatever it eats and can harm houses and other buildings.

## Can mold make me sick?

Most molds are harmless to people, but may cause some “at risk” people to become sick.

“At risk” people include infants, children, the elderly, and people with breathing problems or weakened immune systems.

Illness caused by mold is usually mild. Symptoms can include nasal stuffiness, eye irritation, and wheezing. People who live and work around large amounts of mold may develop more serious symptoms.

## How can I tell if mold is growing in my home or business?

- You can use your senses to detect mold in your home or business.
- You may be able to smell a strong, musty odor.
- Surface areas where mold grows may be stained or discolored.
- The area where mold is growing may be damp or moist.

## How do I prevent mold from growing in my home or business?

- Mold needs moisture and nutrients to grow.
- Keeping your home clean and dry is an easy way to keep mold from growing.
- Remove dust and construction materials from inside and around your home.
- Use vents and exhaust fans in areas where moisture collects.
- Repair water leaks immediately and either dry out or replace materials that become damaged by water.

## How do I remove mold from my home or business?

Removing mold from your home can be a simple task, or very complex. It depends on the size of the problem.

- Small amounts of mold can be cleaned from hard surfaces with detergent and water. Porous or absorbent materials should be completely replaced.
- Persons cleaning mold should wear gloves, eye protection, and a dust mask or respirator to protect themselves from airborne spores.
- Large amounts of mold may require the assistance of a professional, such as an industrial hygienist, to remove.